


Government of the District of Columbia
Office of the Chief Financial Officer



Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Philip H. Mendelson
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

FROM: Natwar M. Gandhi
Chief Financial Officer 

DATE: October 22, 2012

SUBJECT: Fiscal Impact Statement – “Visitability Requirements Act of 2011”

REFERENCE: Bill 19-250 – As Introduced

Conclusion

Funds are sufficient in the FY 2013 through FY 2016 budget and financial plan to implement the bill.

Background

The bill requires newly constructed single-family homes and townhomes that have benefitted from District financial assistance¹ to meet minimum standards of visitability for persons with disabilities. The bill describes in detail the visitability requirements these units must meet, such as providing entrances with no steps, doors and hallways of sufficient width to accommodate a wheelchair, and outlets that can be reached from a wheelchair. Ground floor units in buildings of four or fewer units, as well as larger multifamily buildings that are undergoing substantial renovation, must also meet these requirements. The Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) will review building plans for covered units, and may assess fines for non-compliance with the law. The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will also participate in monitoring compliance with the law.

Financial Plan Impact

Funds are sufficient in the FY 2013 through FY 2016 budget and financial plan to implement the bill. DHCD’s Office of Program Monitoring already monitors compliance with similar requirements for the housing units it participates in funding, so the agency can complete the compliance

¹ As defined in the bill, this includes grants, subsidies, or any other funds from the District; services of District personnel; or the District’s contribution of real or personal property or any interest in or use of such property.

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FIS: B19-250, "Visitability Requirements Act of 2011," as Introduced

monitoring requirements of this bill using existing resources. Similarly, DCRA already reviews plans and permits and conducts inspections on the units covered by the bill, so DCRA can implement these visitability requirements with no need for additional resources. Any revenue raised from levying fines is expected to be minimal because the threat of a fine should normally be sufficient to motivate compliance.